

## Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00 ERDA-07  
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 EPA-04 INR-07 IO-13 L-03 NSF-02  
NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-04 USIA-15 SS-15 SP-02 FEAE-00  
INT-05 ACDA-10 PRS-01 PA-02 /127 W  
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P R 231707Z DEC 76  
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9040  
ERDA GERMANTOWN PA  
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

UNCLAS LONDON 20714

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: TECH, ENGR, UK  
SUBJECT: BRITISH GOVERNMENT REQUIRES INQUIRY ON WIND-  
SCALE EXPANSION

1. PETER SHORE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT,  
INFORMED THE COMMONS YESTERDAY (DECEMBER 22) THAT HE IS  
INVITING BRITISH NUCLEAR FUELS TO DIVIDE ITS PROPOSALS  
FOR THE 600 MILLION POUND EXPANSION OF THE NUCLEAR FUEL  
REPROCESSING WORKS AT WINDSCALE. CUMBRIA, INTO THREE  
PARTS. TWO OF THESE WOULD NOT NEED PLANNING INQUIRIES.  
THE THIRD, THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL PART OF THE EXPANSION,  
IS CONSTRUCTION OF AN OXIDE FUEL REPROCESSING PLANT.  
SHORE SAID THIS PROPOSAL "RAISES DIFFERENT ISSUES OF  
MAJOR IMPORTANCE. SINCE I HAVE NO POWER TO CALL IN THIS  
ONE PART OF A SINGLE APPLICATION, AND SINCE I WISH TO  
AVOID DELAY TO THE OTHER PROPOSALS, I HAVE DECIDED TO  
INVITE BNFL TO BRING THEIR PROPOSALS FORWARD IN SEPARATE  
PARTS. IF AND WHEN A SEPARATE APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED  
FOR THE FUEL REPROCESSING PLANT, I WOULD PROPOSE TO CALL  
IT IN TO DEAL WITH IT MYSELF AND ORDER A PUBLIC IN-  
QUIRY....THIS WILL ENABLE ALL THE RELEVANT SAFETY, EN-  
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VIRONMENTAL AND PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS FULLY TO BE  
EXAMINED."

2. THE OTHER TWO PARTS OF THE PROPOSAL WHICH, SHORE  
SAID, HE WOULD ALLOW TO GO FORWARD WITHOUT FURTHER CON-  
SIDERATION BY HIM IF SEPARATED OUT, INVOLVE (A) IMPROVED

ARRANGEMENTS FOR HANDLING AND REPROCESSING IRRADIATED  
MAGNOX FUEL; (B) DEVELOPMENT OF A PILOT DEMONSTRATION  
PLANT FOR VITRIFYING LONG-LIVED RADIOACTIVE WASTE.

3. SHORE'S STATEMENT WAS WELCOMED BY CONSERVATION AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS, AND BY LOCAL CUMBRIAN INTERESTS.  
MICHAEL HESELTINE, THE CONSERVATIVE SPOKESMAN ON THE  
ENVIRONMENT, ALSO REACTED IN A GENERALLY FAVORABLE  
WAY. HOWEVER, THE FINANCIAL TIMES NOTED IN AN EDITORIAL  
TODAY, THAT "ONE SIDE OF THE (NUCLEAR POWER) BUSINESS  
WHERE THE UK HAS FULFILLED ITS EARLY PROMISE IS THE  
REPROCESSING OF SPENT NUCLEAR FUEL....AT WINDSCALE....  
YESTERDAY'S STATEMENT BY MR. PETER SHORE...RAISES  
SERIOUS DOUBTS AS TO WHETHER THE UK WILL BE ABLE TO  
MAINTAIN ITS STRONG POSITION IN THIS FIELD....THERE IS  
LEGITIMATE PUBLIC ANXIETY ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENTAL AS-  
PECTS OF NUCLEAR FUEL REPROCESSING....(BUT) NUCLEAR  
DECISIONS CANNOT BE DELAYED INDEFINITELY....IF THE  
DECISION IS TAKEN NOT TO REPROCESS OXIDE FUEL IN THIS  
COUNTRY, THE PRICE OF NUCLEAR POWER WILL ALMOST  
CERTAINLY RISE...AND EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE LOST;  
IT IS IN ANY CASE UNCERTAIN HOW LONG POTENTIAL FOREIGN  
CUSTOMERS WILL BE PREPARED TO WAIT BEFORE MAKING OTHER  
ARRANGEMENTS. THE PUBLIC INQUIRY MAY DECIDE THAT THE  
RISKS ARE SO GREAT THAT THE PLAN SHOULD BE ABANDONED,  
BUT THE COSTS OF DOING SO SHOULD BE FULLY RECOGNIZED.  
IT IS A DECISION WHICH WILL HAVE A PROFOUND EFFECT ON  
THE FUTURE OF THE NUCLEAR INDUSTRY, AND IT SHOULD BE  
TAKEN ON RATIONAL, NOT EMOTIONAL GROUNDS."

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
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**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Unique ID:** 00  
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